Advice to Cure Anger

- A person with the habit of often getting angry should know that anger is the faculty that is granted by God Almighty for the sake of the preservation, continuity and survival of human species and for the discipline and order of the family system, protection of human rights and safeguarding Divine laws. If he acts contrary to this divine purpose and makes use of power of anger against the design of God, it will be a breach of trust that deserves severe punishment from Him. What an act of ignorance and injustice it is not to live up to Divine trust and to incur His Wrath! He should therefore seriously think about the moral vices and vicious deeds that are the outcome of anger, and try to remove their evil effects, each one of which is capable of afflicting a person till eternity, causing many problems in this world as well as punishment in the Hereafter.
- Among the fundamental remedies of anger is to get rid of the factors responsible for its provocation. These factors include self-love, which in turn causes love of wealth, glory, and honour, and the desire to impose one's will and expand one's domain of power on the creatures of God. These inherently excite the fire of anger, as the individual infatuated with them tends to hold them in high regard. When someone loves these things, he gets excited and angry if any one of his aspired goals is not achieved. Another factor that sometimes arouses anger is that it is imagined to be a merit and confused with bravery due to one's ignorance. Anger is thus the product of spiritual weakness, insufficiency of faith, immoderation of character and soul.
- A wise person thinks carefully of the evil consequences of anger and the benefits of restraint, thus making it incumbent upon himself to stamp out this fire from his heart with every possible effort. He clears from his heart the love of wealth, honour and the like that provoke his anger. If he resolves to act against his inner self and its worldly desires, with the help and blessings of God, his attachment becomes less intense and he gives lesser importance to them. His inner calm and contentment, caused by giving up the love of wealth, honour and the like, will not allow his self to act unjustly. Gradually, he will not lose the grip of self-restraint at times when anger is provoked in his heart. Finally, he will achieve complete control over his anger. [Adapted from Al-Khumayni, *Forty Hadith,* chapter 7, 'Ghadhab']

Conclusion

- Imam Ja'far al-Sadiq (a) said: "**A mu'min (believer) is the person who when angered, his anger doesn't lead him away from that which is true**..." [Al-Kulayni, *al-Kafi,* vol. 2, p. 186, hadith # 11]

To find out more about authentic Islam, visit:

http://al-islam.org/faq/

...Those who spend (freely) whether in prosperity or in adversity; who restrain their anger and pardon men; And Allah loves those who do good.
(Qur'an, 3: 134)

Imam Ja'far al-Sadiq (a) said:
"Anger is the key (that opens the door) to all kinds of vices."

[Al-Kulayni, *al-Kafi*, vol. 2, p. 303, hadith # 3]

Diseases of the Soul ...

Anger
(*ghadhab)*

It is narrated from Imam al-Sadiq (a) that he heard his father Imam al-Baqir (a), as saying: "A bedouin came to the Prophet (s) and said: `I live in the desert. Teach me the essence of wisdom.' Thereupon the Prophet (s) said to him: `I command you not to get angry'. After repeating his question thrice (and hearing the same reply from the Prophet every time) the bedouin said to himself: `After this I will not ask any question, since the Apostle of God (s) does not command anything but good'." Imam al-Sadiq (a) says: "My father used to say, `Is there anything more violent than anger? Verily, a man gets angry and kills someone whose blood has been forbidden by God, or slanders a married woman'."
[Al-Kulayni, *al-Kafi*, vol. 2, p. 303, hadith # 4]

Reality of Anger

Anger is a psychological state that results from inner agitation and desire for revenge. And when this agitation becomes more violent, it intensifies the fire of anger. A violent commotion engulfs ones brain on account of which the mind and the intellect lose control and become powerless. At that time, the inner state of a person resembles a cave where fire has broken out, filling it with flames and suffocating clouds of smoke that leap out of its mouth with intense heat and a fiery howl. When that happens, it becomes extremely difficult to pacify such a person and to extinguish the fire of his wrath; whatever is thrown in it to cool it down becomes a part of it, adding to its intensity. It is for this reason that such a person becomes blind and deaf to guidance and good etiquettes. In such a condition, all such efforts as counsel, advice, and exhortation fail to appease the person. The more one tries to pacify it through humble requests and efforts, the more violent it becomes until the angry person physically harms someone or seeks revenge.

- Imam al-Baqir (a) said: "..**Indeed, this anger is a spark lit by Satan in the heart of the son of Adam**.." [Al-Kulayni, *al-Kafi,* vol. 2, p. 304, hadith # 12]

The Devastating Effects and Consequences of Anger

- A person given to anger behaves unreasonably like a lunatic without rationally considering the outcome of his actions. He commits ugly and indecent acts and his tongue, limbs, and body go out of his control.
- Anger may lead one to use abusive language against the prophets of God and His *awliya*'. It may lead one to desecrate sanctities and utter slanders about venerable persons, murder a pious or innocent soul, wreck the lives of creatures of God, destroy a family, or reveal the secrets of others tearing up the veils that cover them. There is no limit to such cruel and oppressive acts that a person can commit at the time of outbreak of faith-consuming fire of anger that can destroy many homes indeed an entire society.
- As to the moral hazards, anger may cause malice towards creatures of God, leading sometimes even to the enmity not only of prophets and *awliya*', but also of the Holy Essence of God, the Nourisher. It may also give rise to other vices, such as *hasad* (envy), hidden enmity and uncontrolled and unjust revenge.
- The similitude of anger in this world is the fire of Divine Wrath in the hereafter. In the same way that anger emanates from the heart, perhaps spiritual reality of this anger is the fire of Divine Wrath that also emanates from the inner depths of the heart and spread over the external being, and whose tormenting flames emerge from external organs such as the eyes, the ears, and the tongue.
- Anger that becomes a permanent part of one's nature, it is more catastrophic. It deadens ones heart, renders it merciless and affects the faculty of wisdom. The form that such a state shall acquire in the *barzakh* and on the Day of Resurrection will be a beastly form that has no match in this world; for the brutality of the person in this state cannot be compared with any of the ferocious beasts.
- It is reported from Imam al-Baqir (a): "It is recorded in the Torah regarding which God Almighty confided to Moses (a), saying: "**O Moses, control your anger towards those over whom I have given you authority, so that I may spare you from My Wrath.**" [Al-Kulayni, *al-Kafi*, vol. 2, p. 302, hadith # 7]
- Imam Ali (a) said: "**Protect yourself from anger for its beginning is insanity and its end is remorse**." [Al-Amidi, *Gharar ul-Hikam wa darar ul-Kalim*, hadith # 2635]

The Attribute of Controlling Anger

- The behaviour of a courageous person is based on wisdom and serenity of soul. He gets angry on proper occasion and is patient and restrained. His anger is to the proper extent and if he takes revenge, it is with reason and discretion. He knows well as to whom he should forgive and what to overlook and ignore.
- The anger of a true believer is for the sake of God. In the state of anger, he keeps in mind his duties, rights of creatures and never oppresses anyone. He neither makes the use of indecent language nor acts indiscreetly. All his acts are based on rational considerations and are in accordance with the norms of justice and Divine laws. He always acts in a way that he will not regret his actions later on.
- Imam Ali (a) said: "**The most powerful person is the one who is victorious over his anger with his forbearance.**" [Al-Rayshahri, *Mizan al-Hikmah*, hadith # 15027]
- Imam Ja'far al-Sadiq (a) said: "**One who retrains his anger (towards someone), God will cover his secrets.**" [Al-Majlisi, *Bihar al-Anwar* vol. 73, p. 264 hadith # 11]

When Anger is Provoked…

One of the practical remedies of anger when it is provoked is to restrain it and calm it down in the earlier phase when one's intellect is still in control.

- Imam al-Baqir (a) said "..**whosoever is angry with someone let him sit down immediately if he is standing; for, indeed, doing so will repel from him the uncleanliness of Satan. And whoever gets angry with his family member, let him approach and (gently) touch him; for the feeling of family affiliation, when stimulated by touch, induces calmness.**" [Al-Kulayni, *al-Kafi,* vol. 2, p 302, hadith # 2]
- Imam Ali (a) said "**When a person gets angry, if he is standing, he should immediately lie down (sit down) on earth for a while as this removes the filth of Satan from him at that time.**" [Al-Rayshahri, *Mizan al-Hikmah*, hadith # 15059]